superseded and a Christian Superintendent was appointed as Assistant Secretary. Even when there were permanent vacancies in the Physics department in the Science College, the son of a distinguished Travancore Nair official failed to get a place though he had secured high distinctions in the London University. A grandson of a Travancore Maha Raja had to wait for months before he got an Headmaster's place or an Acting Assistant Professor's place in the College, when third class M. A.'s automatically rose to the position of Professors. It was feared that the claims of the present Logic Tutor in the College of Arts would be superseded by appointing a Christian, a near relation of two Secretariat officers, as the Assistant Professor. While Nair officers deputed to Europe and Nair youths trained in Europe at their own expense had to wait indefinitely for months together to get promotions and appointments, a Tutor in Mathematics who was granted study leave for the study of subjects which had no connection with his work in the college found himself provided, within a week of his return, with an Assistant Professor's place newly created for him. Was it only by chance, the Member asked, that there was no Nair officer holding an honorary post to which an honorarium was attached? The recommendation made by the Administrative Board, Medical Services, to appoint another grandson of the same Maha Raja in the Medical Department was being delayed. The rumour was persistent that a Christian was going to be appointed as the Superintendent of Archaeology. The Member doubted that, in the proposal to revise the principles of gradation among Professors, there lurked some motive to deprive some Nair Professor of his seniority. Of the 21 Headmasters of departmental English High Schools, five were vacant and of these three were caused by the retirement of Nair Headmasters. These vacancies at least should be filled by Nairs. Was there any method, the Member asked, in the deliberate transfer of high Nair officials from the capital to the mofussil? Again, was it by an accident that prosecution was started first against the *Jenmabhumi*? Some sinister motive lurked behind the rumoured transfer of the Mannar *pakuthi* to the Mavelikara taluk for purposes of Legislative Council election. All these instances, he said, proved that the Government were antagonistic to the Nairs.

The Nair Members of the Council had all along been sacrificing the interests of their community to the wider interests of the State in a spirit of patriotism. What they now sought for was only a recognition of their just claims to appointments in the State service. In the process of Christianisation now going on in the service there should be no supersession of the Nairs. To safeguard the interests of the community and to set at rest the growing communal ill-feeling, a well-defined and equitable policy of representation to the public service should be laid down.

The evil was not confined to higher appointments only. Even certain heads of departments put in men belonging to their own communities when vacancies arose. The remedy for this state of affairs lay in the publication in the *Government Gazette* of all appointments, promotions, etc.

A clash between the Hindus and Christians was impending. The article in the *Jenmabhumi* and the *Keraladasan*, the *Paurasamatvavada* conference held at Kottayam, the *Hindu Sabha*, and Nair conferences held in many parts of the State, the conversions and reconversions in Trivandrum and other places were the unmistakable signs of an upheaval which the policy of the Government in the matter of appointments accelerated. It was therefore necessary that the Government should wake up early enough and appease the Nair community by resorting to an impartial and definite principle.

169. Nairs and the Public Service.

MR. MATEVA KURUP NARAYANA KURUP (*Member, Chirayinkil taluk, Group II*) said that a perusal of the list of subjects for the past sessions of the Assembly would show that the Nair Members never made any representation for the promotion of the interests of their own community. It was not because they had no grievances that way, but because they realised their responsibility to their constituents who belonged to more than one community. But, on the other hand, as a result of the representations made in season and out of season by Members of

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other communities, all the departmental heads, with the exception of one, were non-Nairs. That such an important community should be placed so low in the Government service was not an auspicious policy of the Government.

The Nairs represented the landed interests in the State. They contributed 60 per cent. of the land revenue of the State. In point of higher education also, they occupied the front rank. But in spite of all this, their claims to appointments in the public service were overlooked. Their demand was only for a just share. The appointment of Mr. Justice Chatfield as the Chief Justice, of Mr. K. George as the Chief Secretary, of Mr. A. Venkata Rama Aiyar as Judge of the High Court, and of Mr. V. S. Subrahmanya Aiyar as Head Sirkar Vakil were instanced to show the acts of injustice done in recent times. The representation of the Nairs in all the departments was very low. Even then, there were confidential circulars to exclude them and give preference to Christians. Such a policy had become a source of great grievance to the Nair community the redressing of which demanded the early attention of the Government.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Messrs. Padmanabha Pillai, Parameswaran Pillai and Narayana Kurup—

I shall deal with your representations together as they all spring out of the same feeling. That is a feeling I can very well understand. The Nairs have a great tradition behind them; and in the not too remote past as well as in the earlier stages of the history of the country, they have played a great part. As is natural, they feel a certain amount of pride in their former attainments and a perfectly justifiable desire to maintain that pride of place in their country which their forbears held. But it is not by studying what one might have been that one attains what one would like to be; and if to-day the Nairs find themselves, in their opinion at any rate, in a bad position in the race of life, it is to causes going back for some considerable time that they have to look. I can assure you that there is no deliberate policy of suppressing the Nair—there is no calculated effort to keep him out of office. Making enquiries as far as it has been possible for me to do, I cannot discover that any such sinister policy has ever been followed. It is nothing else but a concatenation of untoward circumstances, a chain of accidents, that has kept the Nairs in the position they find themselves to-day. What those circumstances, what those series of accidents have been, all of you know as well as I do. They are buried in the past. Let the dead past bury its dead. Let us look to the present and to the future. Many years ago, a very worthy member of the Nair community, whom some of you will remember, Mr. Aiyappan Pillai, delivered a very fascinating lecture on that great Nair, Raja Kesava Das. I think it is towards the concluding part of the address he said: "Let it not ever come about that Nairs should be hewers of wood and drawers of water". I am wondering whether this present representation, particularly in respect of appointments, is not in a disguised form, the unfortunate fulfilment of that apprehension. Not that the Nairs are, or ever will be, hewers of wood or drawers of water in the literal sense of the term; but this hankering after appointments among them, as among other lesser communities, looks as if they want to be official hewers of wood and drawers of water. Officialdom is nothing but a debilitating form of servitude from which one ordinarily emerges with power and authority very late in life, often too late for a proper fulfilment of the duties attached to those posts. It is to greater things that the Nair community should look. Were it not that the feeling is widespread, so deep and so sincere, I would have almost thought that the Nairs would look forward with joy and pleasure to this yoke being lifted off their shoulders and to being compelled to stand, by stern necessity, firmly set on their own feet and to look the wide world in the face.

Now, I will strike a more personal note. It almost looks as though during the last eight months I have been here, I have sacrificed Nair by Nair on some altar of base prejudice. Let me assure you, if I did any such thing consciously, I would not be fit to speak to you here to-day. I would be ashamed to face you. As a matter of fact, I have a great deal of sympathy with all that you have said.

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In regard to Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai's gloomy representation, may I just say that the eye sees that which it brings with itself the power of seeing? In the long catalogue of woes that he read out, he sees nothing but an effort to exclude, humiliate and discredit the Nair. Let him not think that this is the case. Self-pity is a thing that practically every human being, at a certain stage of his life, passes through. Literature is full of instances of such characters who sit down and brood over their wrongs, and do nothing and advance no further and attain nothing. It is, I am afraid, a state of communal Wertherism that Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai has been passing through this morning. Let me beg of him not to indulge in it. It is an unhealthy state.

As regards the individual cases he has mentioned, if he will come to me some day, or any of you, one by one, will come to me, I can show you that during these eight months there is not one instance in which any of these appointments has been made with any sinister or ulterior motive; but all have been made with one sole object in view—what I, in my limited way, considered to be the best interests of everybody. Occasionally it may be necessary to make a cruel sacrifice upon the altar of efficiency, but that must be done if we are to exalt efficiency and pay due homage to that great quality which alone will make our public service worth its name. That does not mean that the man selected is the only efficient one and the others are inefficient. It may happen in all the circumstances of the case that the one selected is the best suited for that particular post.

There is very little left for me to show you what my attitude of mind is. I hope you have judged me correctly as you were all in a position to judge me during the past eight months, and particularly during the most valuable educative session we are just now having. I have never hidden anything from you. I can but assure you of complete fair-mindedness to everyone, be he Nair or be he Christian, Pulaya or Brahmin. To me one and all are exactly the same. It will be my most earnest effort to see that not one community suffers from a sense of wrong. That sense of wrong is a canker which eats into the loyalty, the patriotism and good feeling of the people and of the community. The man who suffers from a sense of wrong shuts out the realities of life, the man who broods over his wrong lives in an unwholesome atmosphere and feels that he is a martyr, a martyr who has been sacrificed. Once before I expressed the same sentiment. I think it was when speaking to the Malayala Brahmins soon after I came here. I hope that as time goes on the Nairs will realise that the Government are not deliberately and wantonly hurting their feelings, deliberately and cruelly shutting them out from appointments or trying to trample upon a great and patriotic community. You will no doubt say that I have held out no concrete promises to you; I have not listed the appointments which will be ear-marked for Nairs and Nairs alone. Do not expect that of me, because that I will not do—not for the Nair—not for the Christian—not for the Ezhava—not for any community. Each man must take his chance when the opportunity comes. If and when the opportunity comes, if he is fit for it, he will get it; if somebody else is better fitted, he will get it. But justice founded on a close study of the needs of the country and, as I said, on the prime consideration of efficiency, these will be my guiding principles.

I am very, very, grieved that for the first time during this Assembly a personal note was so persistently struck by Mr. Paramesvaran Pillai. Many of the officers whom he has shown as wronged or injured, will, I am perfectly sure, be themselves the very first to deny that that was done to them by the Government.

170. Suggestions for the improvement of the Public Service.

MR. T. K. PADMANABHA PILLAI (*Member, Trivandrum taluk, Group I*) said that, notwithstanding the frequent references made in the proceedings of the Government to resolutions passed by the Legislative Council and to the representations made at the several sessions of the Assembly, the decisions of the Government were not anything other than arbitrary or based perhaps on the stereotyped opinion of the heads of the various bureaus. The tradition had established itself in Travancore that promotions should be based on the inelastic rule

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